

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 6884

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As of Third Reading

**Title:** An act relating to the practice of counseling.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the practice of counseling.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Hargrove and Shin).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

None.

### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Specifies that juvenile court employees who are juvenile probation counselors or who provide certain services pursuant to evidence-based programs are considered "agency affiliated counselors" for purposes of professional credentialing.

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**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

### Background:

In 2008 legislation was enacted which required registered counselors to obtain another health profession credential from the Department of Health by July 1, 2010, in order to continue to practice counseling. The new law created several new categories of credentialed counselors. One of the new categories of counselor is the agency affiliated counselor. Agency affiliated counselors are registered health professionals who engage in counseling and are employed by an agency. Agency means an agency or facility operated, licensed, or certified by the state of Washington. Applicants for registration as an agency-affiliated counselor must provide documentation of their employment with an agency or an offer of employment.

Certain counseling practices are exempt from this counseling credential requirement: other credentialed professions practicing within their scope of practice, attorneys admitted to

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practice in Washington, counseling employees of federal agencies, trainees or students under supervision, counselors under the auspices of a religious denomination, and peer counselors and those who train them.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Juvenile court employees who are employed as juvenile probation counselors or who provide evidence-based services approved by the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services are expressly included in the definition of "agency affiliated counselors." Evidence-based services specifically include functional family therapy and aggression replacement training as well as other approved programs. The definition of an agency is expanded to include counties.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

No public hearing was held.

**Persons Testifying:** None.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.